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Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 /018 W
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R 131207Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2679
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 5291

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINR, IN
SUBJECT: BIO DATA ON H.N. BAHUGUNA, MINISTER OF CHEMICALS, FERTILIZERS AND PETROLEUM

1. BAHUGUNA, 56, ALONG WITH JAGJIVAN RAM, RESIGNED FROM THE CONGRESS PARTY ON FEBRUARY 2, 1977, AND BECAME THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF NEWLY-FORMED CONGRESS FOR DEMOCRACY. HE WAS ONE OF THE MAIN ARCHITECTS OF THE OPPOSITION'S ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST MRS. GANDHI AND HER RULE DURING THE EMERGENCY. IN HIS CAMPAIGN SPEECHES HE BITTERLY ATTACKED MRS. GANDHI AND HER "DICTATORIAL" BEHAVIOR IN PARTY AND GOVT AFFAIRS AND ALLEGED THAT SHE HAD DE-STROYED THE DEMOCRATIC FRAMEWORK OF THE CONGRESS PARTY. IN THE PRESTIGIOUS CONTEST IN LUCKNOW, HE DEFEATED THE CONGRESS CANDIDATE, MRS. SHEILA KAUL, WHO IS MRS. GANDHI'S MATERNAL AUNT. HIS WIFE, MRS. KAMLA BAHUGUNA, DEFEATED ANOTHER CONGRESS CANDI-DATE IN U.P.
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2. BAHUGUNA IS A BRAHMIN, BUT DURING HIS YEARS IN U.P. STATE POLITICS HAD GAINED THE REPUTATION OF BEING FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARD MUSLIMS, AN IMPORTANT SEGMENT OF THE STATE'S POPULATION. HE WAS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE LEADERS OF INDIA'S MOST POPULOUS STATE DURING HIS CHIEF MINIS-TERSHIP (1973-75). HIS NOTABLE POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND

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ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS WERE DUE TO A BLEND OF QUALITIES RARE IN INDIAN POLITICIANS: A NATURAL ABILITY FOR ADMINISTRATION, PERSONAL CHARISMA, UNQUENCHABLE ENERGY, A SOUND GRASP OF ECONOMICS AND SHARP POLITICAL ACUMEN. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, BAHUGUNA IS A WILY AND AMBITIOUS POLITICAIAN WHO IN THE PAST HAS FOLLOWED THE DIRECTION IN WHICH POLITICAL WINDS HAVE BEEN BLOWING. CONSIDERABLY LEFT OF CENTER, HE HAS A PROGRESSIVE IMAGE AND SOUGHT TO REINFORCE THIS IMAGE IN RECENT YEARS BY ESTABLISHING CLOSER TIES WITH THE CONGRESS LEFT WING AND WITH THE CPI. AT PUBLIC RALLIES DURING HIS CHIEF MINISTERSHIP, HE WAS ONE OF THE MOST VOCAL CRITICS OF THE U.S. SHORTLY BEFORE THE ELECTION BAHUGUNA TOLD AN AMERICAN SCHOLAR THAT ALTHOUGH HE HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY, HE HAD CATEGORICAL EVIDENCE THAT THE CIA HAD WORKED AGAINST HIM. DURIG A VISIT TO LUCKNOW, THE SOVIET AMBASSA-DOR IN A SPEECH PROCLAIMED THAT BAHUGUNA HAD PROVEN TO BE ONE OF THE CLOSEST FRIENDS OF THE SOVIET UNION IN INDIA.

3. CURRICULUM VITAE: HEMWATI NANDAN BAHUGUNA WAS BORN IN U.P. APRIL 25, 1921. HE HAS A B.A. DEGREE FROM ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY AND ENTERED POLITICS WHILA A MEMBER OF THE U.P. STUDENT'S FEDERATION. HE WENT UNDERGROUND FROM 1942-43 AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY JAILED BY THE BRITISH. HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE U.P. STATE ASSEMBLY FROM 1952 TO 1969, SERVING IN VARIOUS MINISTRIES IN THE STATE GOVT DURING THIS PERIOD. BAHUGUNA WAS AT ONE TIME AN ADMIRER AND SUPPORT OF MRS. GANDHI. DURING THE 1969 CONGRESS SPLIT NOT ONLY DID HE SIDE WITH MRS. GANDHI BUT ZEALOUSLY WORKED FOR HER. SHE REWARDED HIM BY FIRST MAKING HIM A CONGRESS PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY AND THEN INDUCTING HIM INTO HER CABINET AS COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER AFTER HE WAS ELECTED TO THE LOK SABHA IN
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1971. IN 1973 MRS. GANDHI MADE HIM CHIEF MINISTER OF UTTAR PRADESH NUMERICALLY THE LARGEST ANDPOLITICALLY THE MOST INFLUENTIAL STATE. BY ALL ACCOUNTS, BAHUGUNA PROVED TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL AS CHIEF MINISTER. SUSPICIOUS OF BAHUGUNA'S AMBITIONS AND GROWING POPULARITY, MRS. GANDHI REMOVED HIM FROM THE CHIEF MINISTERSHIP TOWARD THE END OF 1975. FROM THEN UNTIL HIS RESIGN-ATION FROM THE CONGRESS, HE HAD NOT BEEN POLITICALLY ACTIVE. AMAN OF FIRM CONVICTION, HE KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS AND HOW TO GET IT. A GOOD CONVERATIONALIST, HE SPEAKS ENGLISH FLUENTLY
SCHNEIDER

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